

Tribune & Georgian OPINION

A day to focus on gratitude ...

As Americans across the country gather to give thanks today, we offer these thoughts on gratitude and thankfulness from well-known people.

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them. — *John F. Kennedy*

The unthankful heart discovers no mercies; but the thankful heart will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings. — *Henry Ward Beecher*

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others. — *Marcus Tullius Cicero*

If a fellow isn't thankful for what he's got, he isn't likely to be thankful for what he's going to get. — *Frank A. Clark*

If you want to turn your life around, try thankfulness. It will change your life mightily. — *Gerald Good*

Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity... it makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. — *Melody Beattie*

Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good. — *Maya Angelou*

Gratitude doesn't change the scenery. It merely washes clean the glass you look through so you can clearly see the colors. — *Richelle E. Goodrich*

Gratitude, like faith, is a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it grows, and the more power you have to use it on your behalf. If you do not practice gratefulness, its bene-faction will go unnoticed, and your capacity to draw on its gifts will be diminished. To be grateful is to find blessings in everything. This is the most powerful attitude to adopt, for there are blessings in everything. — *Alan Cohen*

Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough. — *Oprah Winfrey*

Enough is a feast. — *Buddhist proverb*

Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves, and spend without fear of bankruptcy. — *Fred De Witt Van Amburgh*

Develop an attitude of gratitude, and give thanks for everything that happens to you, knowing that every step forward is a step toward achieving something bigger and better than your current situation. — *Brian Tracy*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Working together will improve city

Dear Editor,

To those who voted to re-elect me to Post 3 on the St. Marys City Council, my heartfelt thanks. To those who worked for my re-election and provided support through the long campaign, please know how appreciative I am.

Regardless of whether I received your vote, I recognize all of you as my constituents and will work diligently to meet your expectations. A lot of harsh words were exchanged during the election but now that the votes are cast, I hope we can all focus on the tasks ahead to ensure our city retains its small town and historical ambiance while pushing for greater economic stability and vitality.

Throughout the year, the council hears from citizens who share their concerns about decisions or potential decisions. During this recent campaign, I met many citizens at functions, on the street and at meet-and-greets who expressed very positive views about the city's progress. They are pleased with our efforts to pursue economic development and with our work addressing the destructive results of Hurricane Irma. Yes, there are challenges that must be addressed in the future. To all citizens, I pledge to listen and incorporate your thoughts and concerns as we move forward to meet those challenges.

Working together, we will make St. Marys an even better place.

*Jim Gant
St. Marys*

We can all do our part to restore city

Dear Editor,

I would first like to thank Mr. Wiley King for rendering a very clean campaign. Knowing him personally, I feel we can pick up from here and work on the problems of St. Marys.

A very special thanks to Ms. Debbie Shedd for putting aside her personal life to manage my campaign and keeping me focused and on track. I have not played any golf since she took over. I can't wait to get my golf clubs back.

My neighbor, Mr. Dennis

"I don't recall inviting that guy. Who is he?"

"Some peddler. Calls himself Black Friday."



Moore, is awesome: Like a good neighbor, Dennis was always there.

Those who took the time to vote, I commend you and especially those who had the confidence to vote for me. I will serve you with honor and civility.

Thank you to my son, Artie Jones III, for his computer help and Artie Jones IV, who helped me during his leave time. Coming almost directly from South Korea to help, he was right on time and his papa really appreciated it.

There are so many who helped financially and physically I won't name for fear of leaving someone out and keeping this as short as possible, but you know who you are. Thank you.

To all native St. Maryans, remember when everyone spoke, waved their hand, nodded their head or smiled when you passed on the street, in a store or anywhere, even if you were a stranger? Those small gestures made us a happier community. Let's teach our new neighbors what we loved about a small town. We can all do our part to restoring a sense of love and belonging. So here is a wave, nod and smile. Thank you.

*Artie Jones Jr.
St. Marys*

Keep the PSA in mind at the polls

Dear Editor,

The chickens are slowly coming home to roost.

Thanks to the persistent efforts of the Tribune & Georgian staff, the shenanigans of the Mighty Mike Fender and certain county officials are being reviewed.

It is like peeling an onion layer after layer. Keep peeling, folks, it reaches to the very top.

Like I said in my original letter, those with a fiduciary responsibility are just as guilty as William Brunson and should be indicted with him and money restored to the taxpayer.

I sincerely hope this would be on the minds of voters in the runoff election for mayor in Kingsland.

*Bill Johnson
Kingsland*

Commissioners are complicit

Dear Editor,

I won't be surprised when one or more county officials resign in coming weeks.

They claim ignorance about things that are their responsibility. They must believe "ignorance is bliss," as they say. For instance, commission chairman Starline is on the PSA board, yet he was surprised by the financial irresponsibility and illegal acts taking place at the PSA. Starline certainly was aware of co-chair Chuck Clark's "insider" mowing contract with the PSA. Is a grand jury investigating? You might as well start the countdown to Clark's recall that can begin in 164 days.

CFO Mike Fender's private nonprofit was given grants from the PSA for some ill-defined public benefit. His job is to make sure loose stewardship of taxpayers' funds does not happen.

Insider dealing and "looking the other way" happens when politicians keep citizens in the dark. The importance and influence of recent investigative report-

ing in Camden has given us a better understanding of what happens when there is not enough public scrutiny and open debate in our politics. I suspect more Camden rascals will resign.

Which brings us to the guy we pay an extraordinary sum to run county government. We know him as county administrator Steve Howard, but he is also our Sergeant Schultz. Sgt. Schultz from the sitcom "Hogan's Heroes" often used the catchphrase, "I see nothing! I hear nothing! I know nothing!" Like Schultzie, Howard frequently knows nothing about problems occurring under his watch.

Mr. Howard is paid more than \$190,000 a year. He is the eighth highest-paid county administrator in Georgia in the 41st largest county. We should be getting superior performance but that is not at all obvious.

Howard is the spaceport project leader. Nonetheless, he has never made the business case for the spaceport, preferring ever-mutating promises. He has spent \$6 million, and after three years, still has not cleared the first bar toward a spaceport license. We do not own the spaceport property, but taxpayers pay Union Carbide's tax bill. And we do not have a straight answer why the FAA stopped working on the EIS due to "Project Sponsor Factors." Andrew Nelson, hired by Howard as his spaceport "expert," received another \$34,185.69 last month, running his take from Camden taxpayers to more than \$878,633.

On July 1, CFO Fender claimed a \$1.46 million cash

See **LETTERS**, page 5A

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OUR MISSION

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A special Thanksgiving in St. Marys

In the last two weeks, our city lost two of its most respected community leaders, Al Chapman and Gerald Roberts. Mr. Chapman was a longtime successful businessman who championed St. Marys. Mr. Roberts was a trusted civic and spiritual community voice and former city councilman. Both reflected the best of St. Marys citizens who care deeply about their community and are willing to put the time, effort and personal resources into keeping us focused on what is important and worthwhile.

On this day of Thanksgiving, I am reminded how thankful I am as mayor to live in a city with so many caring and involved citizens willing to give back to their community. I am thankful for our dedicated city officials and employees who work tirelessly as public servants. I am thankful for our resiliency as a community to



John Morrissey

Guest columnist

weather the adversity of natural disasters and to come together for the common good. As a city and a community, we have much for which to be thankful.

At this time we also share in a hearty welcome to all the boaters who visit St. Marys and celebrate Thanksgiving here in the city with us. We welcome you and hope your shared feast is a true success, as it always is.

On that note, there is good

news that we can all share in. After months of permit challenges and insurance coverage disagreements, contracts have finally been let to begin the rebuilding and enhancement of the Wheeler Street boat ramps at zero cost to the city and the taxpayers! Even the city's \$5,000 deductible was covered by a special grant. The \$2 million project will include both an east dock and a west dock. The west dock will extend out from the current DNR dock and have three sections capable of accepting eight to 12 boats of various sizes with two kayak cradle docks making easy access to those smaller craft.

The east dock will be slightly shorter with two sections that will be ADA compliant and capable of accepting six to eight boats depending on size. The new design will allow improved access for the National Park Service and Coast Guard

vessels and make the space accessible to large repair equipment like barges if necessary.

The project is anticipated to be complete before the July 4 holiday. Obviously, weather always plays a role in timeline projections as does the availability of materials given the fact that new maritime construction is now occurring up and down the coast once FEMA funding began flowing to cities.

It has been a long year since Irma to reach this point and I appreciate everyone's frustration with delays. But the bottom line is we will now have much better docking opportunities for residents and visitors at no cost to taxpayers. That is definitely a big win for everyone.

Happy Thanksgiving!

John Morrissey is the mayor of St. Marys. He can be contacted at john.morrissey@stmarysga.gov.